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How to Charm a City

Reagan gives a boffo performance in his first appearance in the capital

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Wednesday morning brought one of the more solemn transition rituals: the passing on of intelligence secrets to the President-elect. CIA Director Stansfield Turner arrived at the Jackson Place town house, briefed Reagan for 90 minutes, and left stonefaced and silent; he knows that he will be replaced, probably by William J. Casey, Reagan's transition chairman, who sat in on the meeting. But the ritual had one touch of humor. Hurrying to the briefing, Bush bounded up the steps of 712 Jackson Place and began shaking hands with puzzled secretaries from the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation before he realized he was at the wrong building. Said Bush to newsmen: "You can always tell the new kid on the block."

—By George J. Church.

Reported by Walter Isaacson/Washington

EXCERPTED